



RSVP News

RSVP – Responding to a Call to Serve

Summer 2008

FROM THE RSVP PROJECT DIRECTOR

Dear RSVP Volunteers:

*Tax time is over and I am proud to report that the Tax-Aide Program prepared a record number of returns this year—some **4,000**, and chalked up a record number of volunteer hours—some **7,000** logged in by **over 100 volunteers!** A brunch to honor these volunteers was held on May 20th and generously hosted by **Brighton Gardens of Tuckerman Lane**. The room was beautiful, the food was delicious, and we thank Beth Mclean, Director of Community Relations, for sharing Brighton Gardens for the second year in a row.*

My heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated district coordinator, Jim Cline, and our scheduling office coordinator, Jean Alexander. Finally, special thanks to Bob Bridgeman for his years (and hundreds of hours) as technical coordinator; he is relinquishing his role to a new volunteer, Roger Midgett.

*This summer, the Volunteer Center is reaching out to the Montgomery County community to encourage businesses, groups, and individuals to participate in school supply drives, school grounds clean-ups and other volunteer activities in or around the schools during the summer. Thousands of children do not have the resources to buy the myriad of school supplies needed for the start of school. Notebooks, crayons, erasers, glue sticks, pens, pencils, rulers, backpacks and much more are needed. We encourage you to join forces with friends, families, senior groups or other networks to help collect these types of supplies. Our website will have information on the agencies collecting and distributing supplies and other ways to help our children get **Ready to Learn**: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteer Or, feel free to call me at 240-777-2612 to discuss ways you can participate.*

Have a wonderful and relaxing summer!

Sincerely,

Ann B. Evans

TOWN HALL MEETINGS FOR SENIORS

Montgomery County Fire Chief Thomas W. Carr Jr. will host "town hall" meetings during the month of June at senior centers around the county. The topic will be the proposed emergency medical services transport fee and senior fire safety. Joining Chief Carr will be John Best, liaison to the Senior Citizens Fire Safety Task Force, which endorses the proposed transport fee.



- **Tuesday, June 24th at 10 am**, Holiday Park Senior Center, 3950 Ferrara Drive, Wheaton;
- **Thursday, June 26th at 1 pm**, Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring; and
- **Friday, June 27th at noon**, Long Branch Senior Center, 8700 Piney Branch Road, Silver Spring.

For more information, call the Office of Public Information at 240-777-6530.

SAFELY SURVIVING SUMMER

Fans are available for distribution to frail elderly and adults with disabilities through the Department of Health and Human Services' Aging and Disability Services Information and Assistance Unit. Eligible residents who are having trouble coping with the heat should contact the Senior Information and Assistance Unit at 240-777-3000.

IRS Economic Stimulus Payment Deadline for Filing Extended to October 15, 2008

If you didn't file for your stimulus payment yet, it's not too late. For specifics on how to proceed:

IRS Rebate Hotline: 1-866-234-2942

website: www.irs.gov

(Click on "Stimulus Payment Rebate Questions")

Locally, you may also contact:

Community Action Agency
8210 Colonial Lane 2nd floor
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301-565-7451

2008 PATH OF ACHIEVEMENT WINNERS

At Strathmore Mansion on May 29th, Montgomery County Executive Ike Leggett honored five amazing seniors at the 11th Annual Path of Achievement Awards. The awards were established to acknowledge older county residents for significant accomplishments and inspire others to engage in similar efforts. Congratulations to the winners and the many nominees.

Ruth Emerson for Community Service

In the late 1960s and '70s, she visited elderly shut-ins on a weekly basis through the County's *Friendly Visitor Service*, often bringing her young daughters with her. In the 1980s, she volunteered with the *New Phase Career Counseling Center* in the Commission for Women, *Self-Help for the Hard of Hearing*, *Community Ministries* of Rockville, and *Meals on Wheels*. In the '90s, she was a Nursing Home Ombudsman volunteer, and in 1996 at the age of 74, she became the volunteer director of Olney HELP. Ruth has demonstrated what a difference one caring, giving person can make in the life of another.

John Lopes for Community Service

For the past 15 of his 31 years at Forest Knolls Elementary School, John, a long-time RSVP member, has volunteered over 1,000 hours each year in school community service. He assists in many classrooms, accompanies classes on fieldtrips, volunteers in the after-school photography club, puts up wonderful bulletin board displays, designs and hand-letters signs and posters, and lends a hand in the school office when needed. John shares his interest and talent in photography by taking candid photos of the Forest Knolls students to share with their parents. John has gotten lots of practice accepting awards lately; he won Marriott's *Spirit to Serve* Award in April!

John G. Miers for Advocacy

John Miers, who has suffered from epilepsy since childhood, leads his entire life looking for ways to help others. He was one of the founding members of *St. Luke's House*, established in 1971 to provide mental health services to those being released from hospitals with no treatment plan and nowhere to go. John has served on the *St. Luke's House* Board for 36 years. Additionally, he has served on the Commission on People with Disabilities, worked on Church sponsored committees for people with disabilities, been a support group leader for the *Alzheimer's Association*, worked at Camp for Children with Epilepsy and served on the Board for Parents Educating About Children's Epilepsy. John is a true example of a person who has not let a disability keep him from following a Path of Achievement that has led him from one stepping stone to another helping many, many people along the way.

Irene Spector for Arts & Humanities

RSVP member Irene Spector is a woman of many talents. For over 24 years she has been a radio reader for the *Metropolitan Washington Ear*. You may also find Irene and her husband, Sid, conducting a Sing-Along with residents of the Randolph Hills Nursing Home in Wheaton. Or you may see Irene in action as the MC of Leisure World's Comedy and Humor Club. And – *no kidding!* – Irene is a clown! She's a member of the Jolly Jesters Clown Club and conducts Cancer Awareness programs and the Lung Association program called "Clowns Don't Smoke." She also participates in "Professions Day" in costume, teaching children how to become a clown. Whether reading, singing, telling jokes, or "clowning around," Irene has given Montgomery County residents a great deal of joy!

Joann Woodson for Workplace Contribution

With the Department of Recreation's Senior Programs for the past 21 years, Joann started as a volunteer to give back to the community but did such a superior job she was offered a position. Joann staffs the Clarksburg Senior Program—planning the activities, getting the necessary supplies, coordinating guest speakers, and accompanying her senior group on field trips. She fills in for fellow Senior Club Directors when they are out as well. Her program has enabled long term friendships to grow and has served the very important function of offering seniors an interesting and welcoming place to go each week. Joann believes in the strength, energy, and contributions of the senior community and her Clarksburg Senior Program exemplifies vital aging in Montgomery County.



OASIS Montgomery Offers Summer Classes for Seniors. OASIS, a non-profit organization nationally sponsored by Macy's Inc. and locally by Suburban Hospital, is in the midst of its summer schedule. Interesting classes on a wide variety of topics are available. OASIS Montgomery is located at Westfield Montgomery Mall but many classes are conducted at other sites throughout the County. For information, please go to <http://www.oasisnet.org/Montgomery/> or call OASIS at 301-469-6800 (press 1 extension 211) to request a catalog.

BECOME AN OMBUDSMAN

Sign Up Now for Summer Training
Extensive training! Flexible hours!

You can help make a difference by advocating for better quality of life issues for frail and vulnerable adults in long term care facilities.

Montgomery County's Long Term Care Ombudsman program is seeking volunteers to work as long term care advocates, making regular visits to residents in nursing homes at convenient locations throughout Montgomery County. This program allows *flexible daytime hours* and autonomy in developing problem-solving strategies. Training and technical assistance are provided by experienced professionals.

The intensive training program for volunteer candidates is a comprehensive orientation to the aging process, nursing home systems, applicable laws and advocacy skills. Pre-registration for the summer class is being accepted NOW. **The session begins the week of July 21st from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm daily** at Holiday Park Senior Center in Wheaton. Class size is limited and pre-registration is required. Please contact Eileen Bennett at 240-777-1067 or Eileen.Bennett@montgomerycountymd.gov

SUMMERTIME TUTORS NEEDED

Tutor a child in reading, math, or other subjects to help them catch up to grade level. These children have experienced a period of homelessness and need extra time and support to get back on track at school. The summer break offers this extra time – YOU can offer the support! *Interages* is collaborating with the Silver Spring Interfaith Housing Coalition to help children in the families they serve. Tutors will receive wonderful training, ongoing guidance, and materials from a professional tutor/Montgomery College professor. Tutors need 1-2 hours per week and will meet with students at a mutually convenient time (including evenings) at locations in Silver Spring/Takoma Park. Interested? Contact Sara Cartmill at 301-949-3551, X19 or cartmill@interagesmd.org



RSVP News is published quarterly.

Our Fall issue will be out on September 1, 2008.

The deadline for articles is Friday, August 1, 2008.

Your input is always welcome!

Save a tree -- get your RSVP News online.

email: kathleen.stobie@montgomerycountymd.gov

Kathleen Meaney Stobie

phone: 240-777-2611 fax: 240-777-2601

From the RSVP Coordinator

"When I worked, I did what I had to do.

But when I retired, I decided it was time to do all the things I wanted to do."

Wise words from RSVP member Irene Spector, recently honored as a Path of Achievement winner for her extensive volunteering.

I hope you are doing all the things you want to do. Many of you volunteer with more than one organization because you have many interests and the heart to help. You know the value in volunteering, and we value you for it. Share your passion for service with others by sharing the opportunities in this issue with them.



I am sad to report RSVP member **Frances Sindoris** died suddenly in April. She was an active crafter at Bedford Court -- and a devoted "Red Hatter" there.

Have a spectacular -- and safe! -- summer.

Kathleen

Kathleen Meaney Stobie



TV Converter Box Coupon Program

The Digital Television Transition and Public Safety Act of 2005 requires full-power television stations to cease analog broadcasts and switch to digital on February 17, 2009. Consumers need to look at each analog television set in their home that is not connected to cable, satellite, or other pay television service and make a decision:

- connect it to cable, satellite, or pay television service;
- replace it with a TV with a digital tuner, or
- keep it working with a TV converter box.

For those opting for a TV converter box, there is a coupon program. Between now and March 31, 2009 while funding is available, households may request two coupons which are worth \$40 each and can be used toward the purchase of up to two, digital-to-analog converter boxes.

- Apply online at www.dtv2009.gov
- or

- Call the Coupon Program 24-hour hotline at 1-888-388-2009

Coming up in our next issue ...

"Great Balls of ... Yarn!"

Read all about our RSVP yarners -- where they meet, what they do, and where all their lovely hand-made sweaters, afghans, hats, mittens, etc. get donated.



Montgomery County Volunteer Center
 RSVP – Responding to a Call to Serve
 401 Hungerford Drive, 1st Floor
 Rockville, Maryland 20850

► **RSVP CALL-IN HOURS LINE 240-777-2616 ... it's 24/7!** ◀

RSVP News is now on the Montgomery County website:

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/mcgtmpl.asp?url=/Content/Volunteer/RSVP.asp>

A warm welcome to our *newest* RSVP station ...

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Montgomery County is a volunteer organization working with hundreds of children in Montgomery County who have been placed in foster care due to abuse and neglect. Court Appointed Special Advocates are volunteers appointed by the Juvenile Court and trained to gather information about each child's situation, and submit reports and recommendations to the Court. Court Appointed Special Advocates provide a level of advocacy that the child welfare system cannot afford to provide without volunteers.



www.casamontgomery.org.

CASA needs volunteers to advocate for children in foster care. Volunteer advocates participate in 40 hours of pre-service training and are then assigned to work one-on-one with children who are under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court because they have been victims of abuse or neglect. Once trained, volunteers serve as the "eyes and ears of the Court," and provide information to the Court to help ensure that these children receive necessary medical, mental health, and educational services. Once assigned to a child, the volunteer's time commitment averages 10-12 hours per month. Volunteer advocates must be at least 21 years of age, but there are no particular educational or professional background requirements. Call 301-340-7458, ext. 201, or email mail@casamontgomery.org for information and an application.

CASA is also currently recruiting new members to serve on its volunteer Board of Directors. The Board is particularly interested in recruiting African American/Caribbean and Latino/Hispanic members to better reflect the diversity of the children we serve. Board Membership is strictly on a volunteer basis. Board of Directors members must be willing to take an active part in meetings, serve on committees, advise staff and be available when called upon to assist with Board endeavors. The term of office is one year. CASA's Board of Directors meets from 7:00 pm to 8:30 p.m. the fourth Wednesday in July, September, November, January, March and June at the CASA Program's office in Rockville. For more information, please contact Francha Davis at fdavis@casamontgomery.org, or 301-340-7458, ext. 204.